

Abstract 361**TITLE:** Social Norm Marketing: Making The Connection With Sexual Responsibility**AUTHORS:** Hunter, D. & Gascoigne, J. (BACCUS & GAMMA Peer Education Network)

ISSUE: The concept of misperceptions used for prevention was introduced almost ten years ago by Perkins and Berkowitz (1996). Norming research has found that college students consistently overestimate the number of their peers who drink heavily and their acceptance of the drunken behavior. The acceptance of the misperception of the normative behavior of college students has a strong influence on students. Basically, if students believe most students drink, students tend to drink more. Dr. H. Wesley Perkins (1998) generalized the following five points from work in the social norming field as applicable on most campuses: (1) The gap between actual and perceived norms exists regardless of the type of drug. (2) Misperceptions persist across historical cohorts. Left unattended, these misperceptions are passed on from one class to the next. (3) Similar misperception of peers exists in junior high and high school. Students come to college with a misperception of campus norm that grows worse after arrival. (4) Misperceptions extend across gender, extracurricular, and housing sub populations. Regardless of constituency and personal AOD use, students are likely to be "carriers" of the misperception, passing it on in conversation and reinforcing it in the culture. (5) These misperceptions have potentially significant effect on most students' personal AOD use in addition to and independent of the influences of personal attitudes and actual norms on campus. Misperceptions help activate and reinforce the already permissive attitudes of some students. They simultaneously place pressure on other students with more moderate attitudes leading to heavier consumption and adverse consequences regardless of whether the campus' actual AOD norms are moderate or relatively permissive. Because of the promising results seen with social norming theory and a decrease in AOD use, BACCUS has proposed to research the connection with social norming and sexual responsibility. If we are to truly impact high-risk student behavior particularly where sexual health is concerned, it is important that we recognize and empower the "majority" of students who are making healthy choices.

SETTING: Under cooperative agreement 532 with the CDC, BACCUS is working in collaboration with the following 6 campuses to develop a social norm marketing campaign at each of the following sites: Auburn University, Augsburg College, Macalester College, Northwestern University, The Ohio State University, University of Hawaii at Manoa.

PROJECT: To address misperceptions BACCUS has initiated the following activities (1) trained two members of each campus team with the Montana Model for developing social norm marketing campaigns (2) collaborated with each campus to serve students, ran focus groups to evaluate materials and developed messages for Fall 1999 campaign, (3) collaborated with each campus to develop a marketing plan for fall 1999 campaign.

RESULTS: Currently, all 6 campuses have been trained in the 7-step Montana model. They are piloting the survey instrument and will be conducted the survey in May. By August, each campus will have their messages developed and a marketing plan in place. We will provide the participants of the meeting progress on the campaign development and evaluation.

LESSONS LEARNED: We have learned that many campuses are investigating the use of social norm theory for alcohol prevention. Given the success some campuses have shown in changing binge drinking on campus using social norm marketing, this project will help us investigate if social norm marketing can change student's misperceptions and ultimately create positive behavior change in the arena of sexual health.

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